



*Photo by G. Wilson.*

THE RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP HOSE, D.D.

## Right Revd. George Frederick Hose, D.D.

Bishop of Singapore and Sarawak, 1881-1908.

*With portrait.*

Bishop Hose was born in 1838 (September 3rd) and was educated privately and at St. John's College Cambridge. He held the Curacy of Roxton, Beds., 1861-1865, and was ordained Priest in 1863. He was at first curate of Holy Trinity, Marylebone 1865-1868, and married Emily, daughter of J. Kirby, R. C. S., H. E. I. C., in 1867. He became Chaplain of Malacca in 1868 till 1873, and Chaplain of Singapore in 1873, becoming Archdeacon of Singapore in 1874 till 1881. He was consecrated Bishop of Singapore, Labuan and Sarawak on Ascension Day, 1881, in Lambeth Palace Chapel by Archbishop Tait assisted by 7 other Bishops amongst whom was Bishop McDougall, the Pioneer Bishop of Sarawak, a contemporary of Sir James Brooke. He was the third Bishop of Sarawak and first of Singapore, and his jurisdiction comprised the Straits Settlements, Java, Labuan and North Borneo with spiritual superintendence over the English Congregations in the Malay Archipelago and Siam.

The Bishop at the time of his retirement in 1908 had thus been a Minister of the Church of England for nearly 50 years. He had served 40 years in the Far East, and for the last 27 years of that period as Bishop over a widely scattered and then little known area. Previous to his arrival as Chaplain the Straits Settlements had been part of the See of Calcutta and the Bishop of Calcutta used to visit Singapore and Penang about once in 5 years. There were 3 Chaplains—one at each station—3 churches, and practically no native congregations attached to the Church of England. The Cathedral Church in Singapore had then been recently completed (1861).

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The service of Bishop Hose thus corresponded with the life of the Colony of the Straits Settlements as a Colony instead of an Indian Dependency. He saw several generations of Governors and Officials come and go, and witnessed the rapid expansion of the Native States of the Malay Peninsula under British guidance, the rise and progress of British expansion in North Borneo, and the ever increasing prosperity of Sarawak in the hands of the Brooke family.

With this gradual expansion came increasing labours, and increasing responsibilities for the Bishop, and as time went on it became more and more apparent that it was not possible to combine missionary duties in Borneo with the efficient discharge of the duties of an Anglican Bishop in Malaya.

The division of the Diocese so strongly urged by the Bishop himself has already been carried out and the first Bishop of Singapore and Sarawak is thus also the last.

The life of the Bishop as Chaplain in Malacca during his first 5 years of Eastern service was uneventful. It was there that he commenced his studies in Eastern botany and the Malay language which continued to be a lasting interest to him throughout his career. His contributions to our Botanical knowledge have been considerable and will be separately noticed. As a Malay scholar he was not only able to serve the Church by translations of the Scriptures but also the whole community by founding (November 1877) the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for the promotion of interest in the science and literatures of Malaya.

As its Founder and President, Bishop Hose has taken a warm interest in the Society for nearly 30 years. He has been in touch with all that is best in the life and thought of Malaya for this long period and will be remembered with affection and respect.

To those who knew him, the departure of Bishop Hose is a personal loss. He was of a retiring disposition, but his broad-minded views, and Christian charity, and his fund of reminiscences of the old times made him a delightful companion. Not only will he be long remembered by the Church, and by the

European Community of the Straits, but also by Christians in many remote Mission Stations on the rivers of Sarawak, and in the principal stations of British North Borneo.

This note cannot conclude without reference to the memory of Mrs. Hose, who is buried in Sarawak, and who for over 30 years set a high example of courage and devotion to every Christian woman in the Far East.

R. N. BLAND.

15th February, 1909.

As stated in the note above by Mr. BLAND, Bishop Hose was the Founder of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society on Nov. 4, 1877, and was elected its first president in 1878. He remained as President being annually re-elected till his retirement from the East.

As President in 1878 he delivered an inaugural address embodying the aims and objects of the Society and suggesting the lines on which the members should carry out the work of investigating and recording the unknown facts and history of the Malay Peninsula, and the ideas suggested by him have been carried out to a very large extent. The original members of the Society were ten in number, of whom the only remaining ones are the Bishop (then the Venerable Archdeacon G. F. Hose) and Mr. D. F. A. Hervey, who are both life members. The Bishop delivered two more Presidential addresses in 1879 and 1880, and also published in the Journal an account of the Ruins of Buro Budur, a catalogue of the ferns of Borneo, a list of ferns of Penrissen in Borneo and an account of the contents of a Dyak medicine chest.

The ferns of Borneo and of the Malay Peninsula had always a great attraction for him, and during his missionary travels he succeeded in making an extensive collection of these plants and adding a great deal to our knowledge of them. He freely distributed specimens to various Museums and a very complete series is preserved in the herbarium of the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Many of the new species discovered by him were described by Mr. Baker of the Royal Gardens, Kew,

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and many species, e.g., *Trichomanes Hosei*, *Davallia Hosei*, *Adiantum Hosei*, *Nephrodium Hosei*, *Meniscium Hosei* and *Hemionitis Hosei* were associated with his name. His own private collection of specimens was unfortunately completely destroyed by an invasion of termites into the Cabinets in which they were preserved during his absence on leave.

He did not however confine his interest exclusively to Ferns, and towards the close of his stay in the East devoted some of his leisure to the collection and study of grasses and sedges of Borneo in which research he was assisted by his daughter Miss Hose. He added too to our knowledge of other groups of plants, as is shown by the names of *Dendrobium Hosei* and the beautiful climber *Hosea Lobbiana* which also commemorate his services to botany.

His small garden at Kuching in Sarawak contained many interesting and beautiful plants which he had brought from the Borneo forests and successfully cultivated and we are indebted to him for the beautiful *Crinum Northianum* only known from a drawing at Kew by Miss North, till on its rediscovery in Sarawak, the Bishop sent living bulbs to the Singapore gardens, whence it has been distributed to many other parts of the world. He introduced to cultivation too the *Hosea*, *Pinanga arundinacea* an elegant and rare dwarf palm and many orchids and other plants. Into Sarawak he introduced beside many ornamental plants the first plants of the Para rubber tree from Singapore seed, some of which are still in the garden at Kuching. He retired from the East early in 1908 and all will hope he may live many years to enjoy his well-earned rest.

The portrait we give is by Wilson of Singapore, a large sized copy of which by the same photographer was presented to the Society by Dr. Galloway and hangs on the walls of the Society's Library.

H. N. RIDLEY.